

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

Division of Environmental Health Services:

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- 15900 Smoke Tree, Suite 131 – Hesperia, CA 92345 – (760) 995-8154
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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September is National Food Safety Education Month

1 in 6 Americans will get sick from food poisoning this year. Food poisoning (also referred to as foodborne illness) is a serious public health threat in the United States. In fact, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 48 million people get food poisoning each year, resulting in roughly 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths.

Children, the elderly, and those with weakened immune systems are especially at risk of contracting food poisoning, but there are practical steps that families can take at home to help reduce the risk of getting sick. Always remember to **Clean, Separate, Cook** and **Chill** your food safely to reduce the risk of food poisoning.

Here are some cleaning tips:

- **Wash hands the right way:** Washing your hands with soap for 20 seconds can stop the spread of illness-causing bacteria.
- **Wash surfaces and utensils after each use:** Rinsing utensils, countertops, and cutting boards with water won't do enough to stop bacteria from spreading. Clean utensils and small cutting boards with hot, soapy water after each use.
- **Wash fruits and veggies—but not meat, poultry, or eggs:** Washing raw meat and poultry can actually help bacteria spread, because their juices may splash onto and contaminate your sink and countertops. All commercial eggs are washed before sale. Any extra handling of the eggs, such as washing, may actually increase the risk of cross-contamination, especially if the shell becomes cracked.

To learn how to **Separate, Cook** and **Chill** your food safely, please visit <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/basics/index.html>. To view food safety Public Service Announcements, please visit <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/basics/ads/index.html>.

For more information regarding food safety, contact the County of San Bernardino, Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Services, at 909-884-4056 or www.sbcounty.gov/dehs.

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